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10/053,872

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Samuel Kallner

KALLNER1

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10/28/2005

BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.
624 NINTH STREET, NW
SUITE 300
WASHINGTON, DC 20001-5303

EXAMINER

AILES, BENJAMIN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2142

DATE MAILED: 10/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/053,872 | Applicant(s) KALLNER ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Benjamin A. Ailes | Art Unit 2142 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4-16,26,29-41,56 and 59-71 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4-16,26,29-41,56 and 59-71 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to the Amendment filed 13 July 2005.
2. Claims 1, 4-16, 26, 29-41, 56, and 59-71 remain pending.
3. This application has been assigned to a new Examiner. Updated contact information can be found below in the section marked conclusion.

Claim Objections

4. The amendment to claim 26 has been entered into the record and overcomes the prior objection set forth in the prior office action regarding a typographical error has been withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

5. The objection to claims 3-7, 28-32, and 58-62 made in the prior office action has been withdrawn after a new search has been conducted by the Examiner and new grounds of rejection have been applied to the pending claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation

under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1, 4-13, 15, 16, 26, 29-38, 40, 41, 56, 59-68, 70 and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyk (U.S. 6,597,686) in view of Gaus et al. (U.S. 6,778,652 B2), hereinafter referred to as Gaus and further in view of Kurapati (U.S. 6,888,937 B1).

9. Regarding claims 1, 26, and 56, Smyk discloses the method for communication, comprising:

receiving a request from a first party, submitted via a first communication service provider to a telephony application, to place a call using the application to a second party (col. 6, lines 26-32, Smyk discloses a first caller (first party) dialing a telephone number to connect to a second user (second party));

responsive to a characteristic of the call placed by the first party, selecting a second communication service provider to carry the call between the application and the second party (col. 6, lines 30-34, Smyk discloses the method wherein the service control point (SCP) determines how the call should be routed based on a call processing record (a second communication service provider) for example via standard telephone network (STN) or via the Internet); and

connecting the second party via the second communication service provider to communicate with the first party using the application (col. 6, lines 43-46, Smyk discloses the first and second caller (party) being connected for communication).

Smyk discloses the first and second parties being connected via a SCP (gateway) and the ability to determine dynamically whether the call is being made through STN or the Internet (see col. 6, lines 23-38, but does not explicitly disclose steps being performed behind the scenes as the request comprising the steps of submitting the request to the application via an Application Programming Interface (API), which exposes a platform-independent call model to the application, and wherein connecting the second party comprises connecting the call responsive to an instruction submitted by the application to the API. However, Gaus teaches the use of API to provide services which are determined to be needed based on characteristics provided and provides services such as the ones needed, specifically the service of connection establishment as part of an interface system that serves to integrate PSTN and Internet telephony (see Gaus, col. 15, lines 53-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to implement the use of an API to assist in connection establishment when services are needed to be determined dynamically, for example in the connection establishment methods disclosed by Smyk. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to make such a combination for the reason stated above, this reason being the ability to provide services dynamically based on service characteristics (see Gaus, col. 15, lines 53-59).

Smyk discloses the first and second parties being connected via a SCP (gateway) and the ability to determine dynamically whether the call is being made through STN or the Internet (see col. 6, lines 23-38, but does not explicitly disclose steps being performed behind the scenes which in combination with Gaus provides the general use of an API. The combination of Smyk and Gaus does not explicitly disclose the arrangements of the service providers having respective signaling stacks and the call model being independent of these signaling stacks. Gaus teaches the use of an abstract service layer which provides the abstract call model which is able to dynamically provide the needed call model for calls being made from the first party to the second party. Kurapati discloses a communication network wherein a first party and a second party establish a connection, similar to the connection made as taught by Smyk. The connection made by Kurapati includes the use of each caller having a separate signaling and protocol stack (see Fig. 19, parts 416, 414, 412) and the application (gateway by which the connection is made) being independent of the respective signaling and protocol stacks. Kurapati teaches the use of a system wherein multiple communication protocols may be used and establish connections with each other. To name a few, this includes Signaling System 7 (SS7), an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) protocol, an H.323 protocol, a Session Initiation protocol (SIP), and a Media Gateway Control Protocol (MGCP). The multiple communication protocol system allows any number of protocol based networks, protocol stacks and signaling adapters to be used in order for the establishment of connections to be made possible (see Kurapati, col. 20, 39-48). One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

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applicant's invention would have found it obvious to implement the methods for multiple communication protocol as disclosed by Kurapati, specifically the ability for the first party and the second party to have independent telephony signaling stacks, as well as being independent from the connection medium (the application), in combination with the connection establishment methods and the use of an API as mentioned above and as taught by the Patents issued to Smyk and Gaus. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to make the above combination in order to provide a system wherein a multitude of protocols used by different users (parties) can communicate with each other effortlessly and efficiently (see Kurapati, col. 20, lines 39-43).

10. Regarding claims 4, 29, and 59, in view of the combination set forth above, Kurapati discloses the method for passing messages from the first stack through the application to the second stack (see Kurapati, fig. 19 and col. 20, lines 49-67). Figure 19 also discloses the stacks being independent from each other and the application interface as mentioned above in the rejection of claim 1. The motivation to combine the references of Smyk, Gaus, and Kurapati applies for the same reasons for claims 4, 29, and 59 as used above in the rejections of claims 1, 26, and 56.

11. Regarding claims 5, 30, and 60, in view of the combination set forth above, Gaus discloses the use of providing modules to first and second signaling stacks to assist in connection establishment (see Gaus, col. 15, lines 56-58). The modules used are deemed functionally equivalent in the art to the claimed "plug-in programs" as disclosed by the applicant. The motivation to combine the references of Smyk, Gaus, and

Kurapati applies for the same reasons for claims 5, 30, and 60 as used above in the rejections of claims 1, 26, and 56.

12. Regarding claims 6, 31, and 61, in view of the combination set forth above, Gaus discloses the use of providing modules to first and second signaling stacks to assist in connection establishment (see Gaus, col. 15, lines 56-58). The modules used are deemed functionally equivalent in the art to the claimed "plug-in programs" as disclosed by the applicant. The motivation to combine the references of Smyk, Gaus, and Kurapati applies for the same reasons for claims 6, 31, and 61 as used above in the rejections of claims 1, 26, and 56.

13. Regarding claims 7, 32, and 62, in view of the combination set forth above, Gaus discloses the use of a service layer (a service abstraction layer (SAL)) which is used to determine what services, modules, software services, and tools will be needed to assist in connection establishment steps. This is deemed functionally equivalent to applicant's claimed step of "selecting the second plug-in program comprising passing information regarding the call to a service manager program via a service management interface of the abstract call model, wherein the service manager program processes the information to determine the characteristic, and selects the second plug-in program responsive to the characteristic from a registry of the plug-in programs." The motivation to combine the references of Smyk, Gaus, and Kurapati applies for the same reasons for claims 7, 32, and 62 as used above in the rejections of claims 1, 26, and 56.

14. Regarding claims 8, 33, and 63, Smyk discloses that receiving the request comprises receiving an address of the second party to whom the call is to be placed

(col. 6, lines 26-27), and wherein selecting the second communication service provider comprises parsing the address to determine the second communication service provider that should be selected (col. 5, line 67 – col. 6, line 3).

15. Regarding claims 9, 34, and 64, Smyk discloses receiving the address comprising receiving a telephone number (col. 6, lines 26-27), and wherein parsing the address comprises identifying the second communication provider based on a portion of the telephone number (col. 6, lines 7-11).

16. Regarding claims 10, 35, and 65, Smyk discloses selecting the second communication service provider comprising determining a communication protocol to be used in communicating with the second party, and choosing the second communication service provider such that the second communication service provide supports the communication protocol (col. 6, lines 32-34; col. 3, lines 33-35).

17. Regarding claims 11, 36, and 66, Smyk discloses receiving the request from the first party comprising communicating with the first party via the first communication service provider using a first communication protocol (col. 6, lines 26-28; col. 3, lines 33-34), and wherein the communication protocol used in communicating with the second party comprises a second communication protocol, different from the first protocol (col. 6, lines 43-46; col. 3, lines 34-35).

18. Regarding claims 12, 37, and 67, Smyk discloses that one of the first and second communication protocols comprises a circuit-switched network protocol, while the other of the first and second communication protocols comprises a packet-switched network protocol (col. 3, lines 33-35).

19. Regarding claims 13, 38, and 68, Smyk discloses selecting the second communication service provider comprising specifying a selection rule, and applying the selection rule to the characteristic in order to determine the second communication service provider to be selected (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 5, line 67 – col. 6, line 3).

20. Regarding claims 15, 40, and 70, Smyk discloses the telephony application comprising a teleconferencing application, and wherein connecting the second party comprises establishing a teleconference between the first and second parties (col. 6, lines 30-32; col. 6, lines 43-46).

21. Regarding claims 16, 41, and 71, Smyk discloses the telephony application comprising a call center application, and wherein connecting the second party comprising establishing voice communications between a customer and a call center agent (col. 6, lines 30-32; col. 6, lines 43-46).

22. Claims 14, 39, and 69 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyk, Gaus, and Kurapati in view of Hetz (U.S. 6,185,289).

23. Regarding claims 14, 39, and 69, Smyk, Gaus, and Kurapati do not expressly disclose that specifying the selection rule comprises specifying a temporal criterion, so that the second communication service provider is selected depending on a point in time at which the call is placed. However, Hetz teaches that a subscriber may specify a profile that states that a particular service provider should be used if a call is placed during a particular time interval (col. 7, lines 52-56). One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have found it obvious to allow Smyk's preference information to specify time criteria for which service providers should be

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selected, at taught by Hetz. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to make such a combination in to allow the customer to specify times during which a particular service provider should be used because of the service provider's rate structure (see Smyk, col. 3, lines 2-5).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin A. Ailes whose telephone number is (571)272-3899. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-4, IFP Work Schedule.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Caldwell can be reached on (571)272-3868. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

baa

Beatriz Prieto
BEATRIZ PRIETO
PRIMARY EXAMINER